

Remarks/Arguments

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application, and are rejected in the final Office Action of February 25, 2009. Claims 1, 3-8, 10-16 and 18-20 are amended herein to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter Applicants regard as the invention.

Re: Claims 1-20

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated over Japanese Patent Publication No. 2003-132624 by Tsurui (hereinafter, "Tsurui"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 1, as amended herein, recites:

"A method, comprising steps of:
enabling a user to select a recording title stored on a digital storage medium in a first program chain for password protection;
receiving a password from said user for said selected recording title;
storing said password on said digital storage medium in said first program chain with said selected recording title; and
storing menu data representing a password menu screen on said digital storage medium in a second program chain different from said first program chain." (emphasis added)

As indicated above, amended independent claim 1 now defines a method in which a selected recording title and a password for the selected recording title are stored on a digital storage medium in a first program chain, and menu data representing a password menu screen is stored on the digital storage medium in a second program chain different from the first program chain. Independent claims 8 and 16 are also amended herein to recite these features in a similar manner. Support for this claimed subject matter may be found, for example, in the description of steps 335 and 340 of FIG. 3 in Applicants' specification. Accordingly, no new matter is introduced by this amendment.

Tsurui fails to disclose or suggest, *inter alia*, the aforementioned features of independent claims 1, 8 and 16 in which a selected recording title and a password for the selected recording title are stored on a digital storage medium in a first program chain, and menu data representing a password menu screen is stored on the digital storage medium in a second program chain different from the first program chain.

On page 3 of the final Office Action dated February 25, 2009, the Examiner alleges:

"In paragraph 0037 [of Tsurui] the password as input is stored along with the title ... [w]hether or not the first password is stored in PC#1 or PC#10 is moot because it's the same program chain [collation] which leads to the selected title being display." (emphasis added)

As indicated above, it appears that the Examiner is broadly interpreting the term "program chain" to include a plurality of individual program chains that are ultimately collated, despite the express teachings of Tsurui which clearly distinguish between individual program chains (see drawing 5 of Tsurui and its accompanying description).

In response, Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 8 and 16 to clearly distinguish the claimed invention over the teachings of Tsurui. In particular, and as indicated above, amended independent claims 1, 8 and 16 now specify that a selected recording title and a password for the selected recording title are stored on a digital storage medium in a first program chain, and menu data representing a password menu screen is stored on the digital storage medium in a second program chain different from the first program chain.

Tsurui clearly fails to disclose or suggest such features. First, according to the Examiner's interpretation of Tsurui mentioned above, there is no distinction between an individual program chain and a plurality of individual program chains that may be collated. According to this interpretation of Tsurui, the claimed invention clearly distinguishes over Tsurui by specifically reciting different program chains, namely a

“first program chain” (which stores a selected recording title and its password) and a “second program chain” (which stores menu data for a password menu screen).

Moreover, even if Tsurui is interpreted more narrowly according to its express teachings as disclosing a plurality of individual program chains (again, see drawing 5 of Tsurui and its accompanying description), there is absolutely no disclosure or suggestion that a selected recording title and its password are stored in a “first program chain”, and menu data for a password menu screen is stored in a separate and different “second program chain”, as claimed. In fact, paragraphs [0037]-[0038] of Tsurui cited by the Examiner (as best understood by Applicants) ostensibly teach that a password (i.e., the 1st password) and menu data are stored in a same program chain, not different program chains, as claimed. However, in any event, Tsurui nowhere discloses or suggests that a selected recording title and a password for the selected recording title are stored on a digital storage medium in a first program chain, and menu data representing a password menu screen is stored on the digital storage medium in a second program chain different from the first program chain. As such, Tsurui fails to disclose or suggest at least one notable feature of the claimed invention, and thereby teaches a different solution for providing password protection than the claimed invention. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks/arguments and accompanying amendments, the Applicants believe this application stands in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully solicited. If, however, the Examiner is of the opinion that such action cannot be taken, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' attorney at (609) 734-6813, so that a mutually convenient date and time for a telephonic interview may be scheduled. Please charge the fee for the RCE to Deposit Account 07-0832.

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